

DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #112!

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This go round, we go WAAAAAY into the sleazy underbelly of International Independent Wrestling as Rippa takes a Swing at a preposterous grouping of Japanese and US indie cretins, PETE GOES ALL THE WAY TO AUSTRALIA to bring the only Aussie Scum League we could review, Tony Gancarski takes another gander at more South Carolina Peckerwood Indies, Schneider waxes philosophical on the deep-seeded psychosis of Tomiaki Honma, and, finally, your gentle introduction writer TOTALLY FREAKS out with TWO! TWO! TWO! fantastic IWA Japan shows. Rev Ray goes with the Big Time and takes a look at the rest of the rest of the Super J- the block that really didn't make TV- as he continues his Journey Into New Japan Junior Delight and Loathing that started last week. Less talk, more PHILLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL.....

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!@!@!@!@!@!@Big Japan Battlestation Taped 10/3/99

(PHIL SCHNEIDER)

Shadow Winger v. Tomokai Honma Š Barbed wire board match: These guys are the two most athletic of the new generation of Big Japan death matchers, and they put on quite a show- especially considering this was an undercard death match. This was held outside at a Yakuza picnic or something. While a lot of the recent crop of excellent Big Japan death matches have had a wrestling section at the beginning, this one kicked right into the sickening violence- with Winger hitting a quick tope-con-hilo and both guys brawling to the ground. When they get back into the ring Honma takes a flip bump into the barbed wire board. At this point Honma is already spraying blood out of his head. Winger then takes the biggest bump of the match, as he gets powerbombed into a standing board, and slides his bare back down the barbed wire. They brawl to the dirt again and Winger hits the

big fat highspot of the match with a senton off a semi truck through a table, which looked really great because Winger had such a graceful descent. Winger tosses him back into the ring and makes him the bloody roast beef in a barbed wire sandwich- with Winger acting as the toothpick with a top rope senton. Winger sets him up for a rana through the barbed wire boards, but Honma hits a top rope powerbomb through the board for the win (a spot they first blew, and then repeated). Really good death match, with Winger surprisingly taking the bigger bumps, as few people are sick enough to out bump Honma. Honma kicks in some fat bumps of his own, along with his usual ketchup bottle-in-the-microwave level blade job. Really nice wrestling sequences stringing the bumps together as well. This didn't have the same level of insanity that the Honma v. Yamakawa or Honma/Yamakawa v. Winger/WX matches did, and they did sort of blow the finish, but it was still the third best Big Japan Death Match ever, and indicative of the hotstreak Big Japan is on.

Masayoshi Moteji v. Men's Teiho: This was for the Big Japan Junior Heavyweight title and is between probably the two most degenerated wrestlers in Japan, Men's Teiho was really great at one point and Moteji was quite carryable, they both suck the puroresu equivalent of donkey cock now, and this match was a prime example. The first part wasn't terrible, but then they both no-sell a pair of piledrivers and I consider hurling my remote at the screen, I demure and instead use it to FF past the rest of this crap.

Shunme Matsuzaki + Kamikaze v. Daikokubo Benkei + Abdullah The Butcher: Mercifully clipped down to a couple of shots of Abby stabby, Shunme lariats and a pair of fat guy highspots by Kamikaze (including a stardust press).

All I needed to see.

Shadow WX v. Mike Samples \$ King of the Death Matches Title: Mike Samples kind of looks and wrestles like an uglier fatter Bobby Jagers É DADDY!, and Shadow WX is the least of the Big (Japan) 4, so this was going to be a little rough. Both guys bled a lot, with hip-hop Shadow getting the styling blood covered Yellow FUBU jersey and Mike Samples sporting the bloodstained dress shirt. Lots of punches and glass lightbulb stabbing, but not much else worthwhile. There was one nice bump, as WX gets powerbombed through a trio of fluorescent lightbulbs strewn across a pair of chairs. The ending was pretty cool too, as WX wraps a towel around his arm, lights it on fire, and hits a flaming lariat for the pin, with Samples taking the impact right on his face. The rest of this match was pretty ass, and I can't imagine their upcoming Death Tourney final being any better. Samples seems pretty unwilling to take big bumps, which really makes me question why they brought him over. If you wanted a gajin, there are plenty of lunatics in seedy bars in the South willing to sacrifice their health and future well being for fleeting fame and glory- I mean you got Ian Rotten right there, for Christ sake.

Taped 10/17/99

Jun Kasai + Shadow Winger v. Ryuji Yamakawa + Matsuhiro Matsunaga: Matsunaga was one of the better death match workers of his time, but his knees are fucked and his desire seems gone, and he just dogs it in this match- content to do a half-assed Tiger Jeet Singh impression. Yamakawa sort of takes the match off too, content to hit a nice tope-con-hilo, Winger does a senton off the bleachers through a table, and some in ring sentons, but not much else. This match is the Jun Kasai show. Kasai (who I don't even remember seeing before) stakes his claim to throne of Big Japan lunatic bump boy, by killing himself over and over. Kasai is kind of a Japanese Spike Dudley, little guy who isn't afraid to spray blood and bump like a freak, however imagine someone with incubatory bump-freakish tendencies nurtured in a Big Japan environment. He bleeds buckets in this match, and takes a powerbomb off the ring apron straight to the floor,. Delivers a Dynamite Kidesque (which is an appropriate allegory, if not by work, but by fate) falling splash from the top rope to the floor through a table, with a barbed wire baseball bat on Matsunaga's chest, and most brutally, a suplex from the ring apron back first across a table which was 10 feet into the audience, just crushing Kasai's kidneys. After all that he has to job, to a suckass Tongan Death Grip by Matsunaga. This Kasai kid has a future if he has a future.

Shadow WX v. Tomokai Honma Š King of the Death Matches Title: Some people can experiment with alcohol, tobacco, and, drugs and remain untainted by addiction. There are some people who become slowly dependent on those things, until they find themselves undeniably hooked. Then there are some people, who after that first lungful, swallow, snort or tapped vein are hooked immediately. They have found what they desire, and it becomes the focus of their life. Tomokai Honma's first blade job was slightly more than a year before this match and in that year he has probably spilled more blood per capita than any wrestler in the history of the sport. If we are averaging pints spilled per match, Honma measures up to Carlos Colon, Bruiser Brody, Atsushi Onita, Bobby Heenan, Tommy Rich or any other of wrestling's human blood banks. For the first part of his career Tomokai Honma, was content to provide the work on the Big Japan undercards, he delivered some good lucha style matches with Tajiri, stopped off in BattlArts and exchanged kicks to the face, and worked standard pro-style with Abdullah Junior Kobyashi. He was turning in a fine professional wrestler, early in his career, but the carnage of the main events was waiting for him. He had to know what was coming: if you are a young up and coming wrestler, you don't join the Big Japan dojo if you aren't prepared to taste the sweet sting of sharp steel across flesh, however his forehead remained unscarred for the first couple of years of his career. Then came the Big Japan Death Match tournament. In this tourney Honma moved up to the big time, and for the first time took a small razor blade from the tape across wrist, and drew it across his forehead, and like a depressed, bulimic teenage girl who slices her arms to stop the pain in her heart, he was at home. After the first time, he couldn't stop, every match was a display of gore, not just death matches, but six-man tags, juniors matches, whatever. If Honma was wrestling, Honma was bleeding. The apex of this obsession was this match- Honma delivers the sickest blade job I have ever seen, just coating the ring, the floor, and his opponent with his blood. On two different occasions blood squirts out of his forehead like water from a faucet. He seems to be habitually, unconsciously cutting himself, he appears to have bladed more than a half a dozen times. Along with the spigot from his forehead, his back becomes a smeared mess of red, from going back first into barbed wire and glass. There were some big bumps in this match, Honma gets Powerbombed over the top rope on to a barbed wire board, WX gets powerbombed through a florescent lightbulb board, there was also some nice straight wrestling, but all of that is as irrelevant. The blade job stands above it all. I don't know what demons live inside Tomokai Honma, but it is strangely compelling to watch him attempt to cut them out of his body. Million Billion Zillion Stars

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@#@@#@ NEW JAPAN- Best of the Super J VI : Part 2.
(REV RAY DUFFY)

Continuing from last week, this is more or less "Stuff that didn't make TV from the B Block"

Masao Orihara v. El Samurai : I believe this is Orihara's first Super J appearance since '93. A lot has changed since then. Back then Orihara was a run up the ropes high flyer in the WAR Promotion. Now he's all about indy scum heel tactics. This opens with Orihara jumping Sammy during the ring intros. Orihara gets some brief brawling in before Samurai drops him with an elbow and sdishes out some brawling of his own. Orihara gets in a double stomp off the apron following some brawling on the floor. Orihara also lets us know that Bird is the Word... or Finger

or something during the course of the match about 80 times. Orihara gets in the "show them to the 4 sides of the ring piledriver", which Samurai would later duplicate. Orihara works a half crab and Samurai grabs his ass... and it just wasn't an accidental brush, he copped himself a big ole feel. I'm sure Orihara's filing harassment charges against him. Samurai gets in control following Orihara

missing a top rope splash, Sammy works a figure four, Orihara gives him the double bird and then Samurai really cranks on the pressure. Samurai gets a 2 following a brainbuster and a diving headbutt. Orihara flips out of a german suplex attempt and celebrates with a double bird, Samurai goes for another, but Orihara splits the uprights twice and takes Samurai to the floor so he can hit a moonsault off the second turnbuckle to the floor. Samurai hits a swinging DDT. Orihara flips out of a bodyslam attempt and hit sthe MD-II for 2. Orihara follows up with a spider german/moonsault combo which would be neat if Samurai didn't have to look like an idiot and reposition himself on the mat for the moonsault. Samurai puts this one away after a DDT counter and then mixing in a few reverse DDTs and a piledriver, leading to the finish with an inverted facelock brainbuster. This was an acceptable match, nothing too spectacular, but it was pretty solid except for one or two rough spots. It didn't have Takaiwa in it, so I'm happy.

Kendo KaShin v. Minoru Tanaka : This starts out with a quick exchange of reversals with Kashin working the arm and Minoru working towards a chin lock. Kashin offers a handshake but Tanaka will have none of it. They work another segment were both flow through jujigatames, hizajujigatames and end up Kashin on top following both putting achilles tendon holds on each other. Kashin tries to be a dick by stepping on Minoru's head following some more holds, but Minoru takes him down into a reverse ankle lock which Kashin counters into another leg lock of sorts which Tanka rope breaks out of and takes a hike. Kashin chases him out and throws him back in, but Minoru starts opening up with some strikes and takes over. Tanaka traps Kashin on the ropes in the corner and busts out 3 consecutive drop kicks as Kendo's legs are stuck out of the ropes so he's doing a split in the corner more or less. Tanaka makes a mistake and runs into a jumping neckbreaker drop.

Kashin busts out a torture rack, but Tanaka reverse it into a sleeper with bodyscissors which again gets countered by Kendo forcing a rope break.

Tanaka pulls out a corner moonsault into a jujigatame attempt. Kendo runs outside and walks away from a pescado attempt and then throws Tanaka into the Kouraken Hall front row and hits Tanaka (and a female fan in the front row) with a chair. Tanaka gets in a roll up counter to a Kashin suplex attempt into the ring, busts out a series of kicks and a jujigatame attempt. More kicks, Kashin catches the leg but Tanaka right with a hizajujigatame. Kashin goes for his victory roll into the crossarmbreaker, but Tanaka drops him and hit a dragon suplex. Tanaka looks to press the advantage but out of nowhere, Kashin hits him with the crossarmbreaker for the win. This is arguably the best Kendo Kashin match I've seen. As lacking as his offense is, Kashin is really good on the mat and could hang with Tanaka. The reversals and mat work was pretty awesome. I didn't like the finish because it just came out of nowhere, but given that both guys put the move over as finishers, I can see it ending that way. I could live with this as a possible feud in NJPW.

Masao Orihara v. Kendo Kashin : Orihara hits Kashin with a tope con hilo at the start and it's on. Orihara nuts Kashin early and Kashin revenges with one himself. Kashin takes it to the floor and hits Orihara into the post and with a metal box. Kashin gets control for a segment and goes for his surfboard type move, but Orihara reverses it into a cross armbreaker attempt. They do the snapmare train ending in a Kendo reverse DDT. Kashin fights his way out of a spider german attempt, But Orihara counters with a running lygerbomb. Orihara hits a tombstone and goes for a moonsault, Kashin rolls out of the way, Orihara lands on his feet but gets caught in the jujigatame for the quick tap out. Again with the flash ending. Otherwise I didn't have a beef with this match.

Minoru Tanaka v. El Samurai : Tanaka offers the handshake, but Samurai wants none of it. They take it to the mat right away with mostly both jockeying for position before Tanaka gets in an hizajujigatame. Samurai takes over with a bit of brawling. He hits a piledriver on Tanaka, throws him to the floor and gets a tope suicida. When Minoru gets in, he low kicks the crap out of Sammy's leg and works some leg holds. Samurai escapes one move but eats an enzugiri, followed by a pescado to the floor. They do a few standing switches ending in Samurai hitting the reverse DDT, a lariat and a top rope drop kick for a two. Minoru flips out of a powrbomb attempt, but runs into a jumping DDT and a powerbomb for two. Sammy misses a diving headbutt and Minoru drops him with a top rope drop kick for two, right into a jujigatame. Samurai fights up to his feet, but Minoru locks in a hizajujigatame before Samurai makes it to the ropes. Samurai escapes further damage with an enguziri, a corner lariat and a swinging DDT for two. Samurai hits his super reverse DDT and asks the ref to check Tanaka rather than going for the pin. Samurai hits a super rana, but Minoru rolls through for a pin attempt. They work reversals over a dragon suplex attempt, which turns into a wakigatame, which Sammy tries to roll out of, so Minoru turns it into a jujigatame, which Samurai rope saves. Tanaka recovers and hits his Northern Lights Suplex into the jujigatame for the win. This was really eh. I had higher expectations.

Shinjiro Ohtani v. Kendo Kashin : You know, for a guy donating his funds to the Kosavo refugees, Kendo's certainly a cheatin' bastard in all his matches. Kashin jumps at the bell and again uses a metal box to beat on Ohtani. Ohtani reverses a corner whip and hits a corner high kick, followed by his bootscrapes and a springboard drop kick. Kendo escapes a sleeper attempt and applies a crossface armbar which Ohtani breaks by biting his fingers. Kashin hangs Ohtani in the tree of woe and puts the boots to him, he goes for a chair, but Ohtani escapes his predicament and uses the chair on him first, then gets a near fall with a lyger bomb. Kendo escapes a dragon suplex attempt and un fouts Ohtani leading to a jumping neckbreaker drop before hitting the torture rack again. They do a few reversal spots with Kendo catching Ohtani in the cross armbreaker, both times with Ohtani rope saving. They do a segment where Ohtani and Kashin reverse each other 4 times and ends with Ohtani scoring the pin with a german suplex.

Ohtani v. El Samurai : Again with offering Sammy the handshake, which again gets turned down. They switch holds on the mat which has Ohtani break it with a noogie to the eye/nose. The story seems to revolve around Samurai working on one of Ohtani's arms while Ohtani goes

after one of Samurai's legs. Samurai does a spot where he knee drops Ohtani's arm as Ohtani holds the ropes trying to get up. This stays pretty much the basics with they working the respective limb. It's not until a good 7 to 10 minutes into the match that they start busting out spots with Ohtani blocking a swinging DDT and then hitting a diving somersault off the apron on Samurai (while remembering to sell the arm while on the floor). Samurai gets in a tope. They go through some of their high spots, but it's not overkill on any of them. Samurai remembers to limp from time to time to sell the leg. Ohtani fights his way out of the super reverse DDT attempt to hit a spring drop kick. They do some near falls but all roads are leading to this being a time limit draw. This wasn't bad, but it wasn't real awe inspiring either. I guess it should be commended as not being 1 million finishers kicked out of 1 million times.

Kendo KaShin v. Dr. Wagner Jr. : For some reason, there's a big jump cut in this after the match started, so you've gotta wonder what the hell they screwed up to make them totally edit it off the tape. When we come back, Doc powers out of a suplex attempt to hit a brainbuster for two. This goes out to the floor and both guys take turns hitting the other with chairs. Kashin kicks the railing at some fans at some point because he's a charitable asshole. Doc gets all goofy and busts out the sumo slaps. Kashin counters his corner charge with a drop toe hold into the buckles and hits the cross armbreaker takedown off the buckels for the win. This was so really right there. Yup.

After thoughts : Nothing that would make you want to kick in the TV. Aside from the really cool Tanaka/Kashin match this is a big right in the middle of wrestling. I didn't hate it, but I didn't love it.

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%^%^%^%^%^ HIGH RISK CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING TV (July '99)

(ADORABLE PETE STEIN)

Having taken note of Schneider's UWA review in DVDVR previous, I have decided to pick up the gauntlet and review Australia's HRCW- after all, wrestling can't get much more INDY SCUM than when it's from a country that started out as a gigantic penal colony. This seemed like quite the Australian WXO, only with better workers and an actual hot crowd as opposed to someone leaning on a "heat" button.

Nailz and Primo Carnera III in the opening graphics... *gulp*

ANTIFAZ DEL NORTE vs. ZORRO: The greatest match in Australian history as Mexico's top ESPUMA INDEPENDIENTE rip it up for 10 minutes. They hit every spot they know and the crowd's digging every second of it, but it's pretty obvious that Mark Lewin and his nameless Aussie play-by-play man who doubles as the ring announcer are in WAYYYYYY over their heads when it comes to calling these types of matches. Lewin in particular is so clueless that I was afraid he wouldn't know what to call a DDT (thankfully he did). NAPBPMWDATRA: "Mahk, they're very similah resslahs, aren't they?" The first of many LOL lines tonight. The ref is in a similar way, as there are two points where both Antifaz *and* Zorro have to shove him out of

their way before they can kill the fudge out of each other with their dives. Antifaz eventually misses a Tumbleweed off the top, which allows Zorro to hit a pumphandle and follow with a frog splash for the pin. This goes 10 minutes, the crowd is suitably nuts for everything, and I consider moving to Melbourne for the first time in my young life.

CEDMAN SPARTACUS/CANADIAN TIGER vs. THE ABDULLAH BROTHERS: The Abby Brothers are of course the Headhunters, which makes them automatic babyfaces with the W*ING-esque super-seedy Melbourne hardcore fans. Basically the gimmick means they yell gibberish at the crowd while Mark "The Professor" Lewin tries to put them over as African savages. At one point Tiger hits a plancha ("YEAHHHHH!")* on B, who presses him until Ced drops him with a second plancha (conveniently AAA'd by the Aussie camera crew). This is basically a quash-in-disguise for the Hunters as Tiger and Ced get just enough offense to keep things interesting, but the outcome is never really in doubt. A finally downs Tiger with a slam and hits the SCARIEST MOONSAULT IN THE HISTORY OF OUR GREAT SPORT for the pin... I mean if he'd waited any longer to rotate we would've been looking at a murder-suicide here. Hunters continue to give their opponents what-for postmatch, which leads the Pitbulls to make the save. Yaaayyy...

Well, this is a first- Shiny, Happy Primo Carnera on THE STICK! In deference to his micwork, I hereby coin the phrase "cutting a Primo."

BRUTE FORCE, THE WILD TURK vs. HIGH RISK WARRIOR: Lewin mentions finding the Turk in Turkey... you mean *that's* where John Kronus went into hiding after his ECW gig dried up? OTOH, you have Ultimate Warrior Clone #17,856... and he's got an outie. Kronus soon realizes that WRESTLING HAS NO EFFECT on the Warrior, so he heads outside and posts Warrior to a big "ECW, ECW" chant. Kronus hits all his spots but finally misses a twisting dive off the top. Warrior comes back with a 10-punch spot on Kronus, at which point he KO's the ref for the DQ. Oh well, at least he didn't have to put the big lug over.

Hey, Australian commercials! Good to see that their carpet company ads are just as dopey as the ones we have Stateside.

DOA vs. THE PITBULLS: NAPBPMWDATRA bills DOA's opponents as "the high-flying Pitbulls"- I guess you could list that as a side-effect of mainlining ones own urine, but I digress. Other than a couple of minutes brawling on the floor (which a crazed Lewin calls like Joey Styles calling New Jack putting Angel through a table off the roof of ECW Arena), this is just a straight old-school tag match with hot tags and such. This goes a BRAIN-MELTING 21 minutes before the Headhunters distract the ref, allowing one of DOA to chair PB2 and get the win. This was apparently for the group's tag titles, but Lewin runs in and reverses the decision. About as interminable and stinky as you might imagine.

NAILZ THE STRANGLER vs. PRIMO "ITALIAN GIANT" CARNERA: "Oh my." This goes for 15 minutes and the best thing about it is the huge "BORING" chant during the early stages. They

finally brawl outside the arena for the DCOR, at which point Kronus and Warrior run in to set up the big main event... *shudder*

...which thankfully isn't on this tape. =) The opening match was great and it was interesting watching Canadian Tiger's life flash before his eyes, but everything after that is INFINITELY missable...

(* = Ob DVDVR 101 reference. WE NEED MORE HITS!)

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++_+_+_+_+_ World Pro Wrestling Comm (Volume II) - June 2-6, 1999
(PHIL RIPPA)

I am jumping feet first into the world of sleazy Japanese Indies as I review the weird U.S. Indie (NWA New England) meets bizarre Japanese Indie tape that we got from Jeff Lynch. Do I dare wonder what was on Comm 1?

Jeff Mangles vs. Horace The Psychopath: The last time I saw Horace was about a year and a half ago. He was a passable little wrestler back then. Not so good anymore. Mangles looks like Little Guido. Doesn't have the wrestling ability of Little Guido. Looks like him though. For some reason, this match is clipped to all hell and the restholds are the things that are left in. (This should have been a hint to the quality of the camerawork for the rest of the tape.) I don't think these were the gaijins that the fine Japanese folks had in mind when they bought their tickets.

Bill Irwin/Rikio Ito vs. KKK#1/Kinjiro Oki: When Bill Irwin, in June of 1999, is the best wrestler in the match there is some serious suckage going down. Ito is proof that Ron Popeli's Infomercials are not being shown in Japan. KKK looks like me in a wrestling mask. (He is about 7 feet tall, weighs a buck 25. Has the same wrestling skill - zero) The most puzzling thing is that KKK DOESN'T have a KKK gimmick. No white sheet. No white hood. No flaming cross. Not even an Afro on a cross. Instead, KKK and Oki appear to be wrestling waiters, right down to the faux cumberbuns on their chests. "Good evening, Mr. Irwin. The Special of the Day is some Red Snapper served over rice. Would you like Mr. Oki to show you a wine list?" My, my, this match is not good. A miscommunication spot (think Mulkeys vs. the Gladiators) leads to the fighting waiters losing the match. KKK then turns on Oki. The two fight and then convince the hot ref to let them have a match.

KKK #1 vs. Kinkio Oki: If you squint really hard, it looks like Giant Baba vs. Rusher Kimura without the actual history. That still isn't a good thing. I hit the fast forward bottom but am still unfortunate enough to catch the spot where KKK#1's skanky second is supposed to trip Oki but misses so Oki basically trips courtesy the mysterious ring elf. This is my punishment for some sin. I really need to make good with God.

Kyoshiro Suizen vs. Yuto Aijima vs. Asian Cougar vs. Jeff Mangles: Either the cameraman is having a seizure or he was accepting drinks from the Dynamite Kid. Things cut back and forth for no reason. Important spots are missed - including the finish. There were times when you would see someone, let's say Mangles, setting up a chair for some highspot and the camera

would cut to Aijima playing to the crowd. I know Mangles kills himself at one point because the crowd starts chanting "USA! USA!" Cougar was all about the rolling senton as he does at least four through out the course of the clipfest. This match is not for viewers with pacemakers. Or viewers with the an actual love of wrestling.

Arkangel de la Muerte vs. Shinobi: We have moved to a different venue for this affair and there is about eight people in the audience. So maybe that is why the arena is dark. This would be caida 543, 544 and 545 of Arkangel/Shinobi's neverending match. The first two caida's fly right on by as Arkangel comes out on the good end of a series of rollups. Shinobi hits preposterous submission 246 to take the second caida. Third caida is entertaining as it delivers the purest wrestling that will be seen on this tape. Arkangel wins by getting Shinobi to succumb to something that looked like Arkangel was using the stench from his armpit to overpower Shinobi.

Rikio Ito vs. Kyoshiro Suizenji vs. Hiroki Araiwa: All the wrestlers in the world to imitate, Ito is picking Road Warrior Animal. ROAD WARRIOR ANIMAL!!!!!!!!!! Face paint and mullet and everything. (I guess I should be thankful that it wasn't Road Warrior Hawk.) Suizenji is the little shooter boy who won the four-way earlier and can possibly sneak into the 500 if I see a few more of his matches. Araiwa has the look of the classic sleazy Japanese indy worker. "Oh, I'm not very good. Here is my white T-shirt that masks my hideous man boobs. I will run a razor across my forehead to make up for my lack of wrestling knowledge." And GOLLY does Araiwa hit a gusher for no other reason than it is a sleazy indy. Araiwa spills about 14 of his 16 pints of blood, turning his white shirt red and leaving Honma-level pools of blood on the canvas. Jesus, someone really needs to start teaching a course in human anatomy so all these guys will stop tapping major veins. Hell, there is a blood shortage in this country. At least, do that for a good cause.

Horace the Psychopath vs. Yuto Aijima: Aijima paints his face like Horace. That might be the only thing of note that takes place in this match. Ya know, Aijima, with his roid assist body, reminds me of Max Muscle. I guess there are just some things a little too sleazy even for these seedy promotions.

The rest of the tape focuses on the feud over the NWA tag titles between the Brotherhood (Knuckles Nelson and Eric Sbraccia) and the Caffeine Connection (comprised of Cola Kid and Pepsi Boy- Cola Kid sporting a Coca-Cola logo-soaked outfit and Pepsi Boy sporting a Pepsi-based get-up. Their picture was on the DVDV Newsboard and may still be there. Who could be sure?- DEAN.). The Brotherhood give a textbook US indy interview running down their opponents. (Punks! USA! Suck! Number 1!)

Cola Kid vs. Knuckles Nelson: Internet rumor has it that Cola Kid is Basara- the Japanese indie staple with the beard and moustache on his mask. That means don't expect much from this match. Nelson sports the full-on king-sized mullet with bald spot. Which of course raises the question, which is most offensive - The mullet, the bald spot or the big KNUCKLES NELSON written across his ass? In true US heavyweight fashion, the two muddle through a few things before Cola Kid applies the abdominal stretch (which I discover is his finisher - welcome to

sleazy indy city. Appearing next tour, M. Wallstreet.) Sbraccia makes the save which brings out Pepsi Boy hot on his heels. Mohammed Yone (who Internet rumor has as being Pepsi Boy) hits a passable Asai moonsault which have the Americans regrouping. After much gesturing, Pepsi Boy and Sbraccia pair off.

Pepsi Boy vs. Eric Sbraccia: As we spiral deeper and deeper into the deeps of bad US wrestling, Yone, who Dean pushed to the absurd position of 89, gets the abdominal stretch on Sbraccia but before Sbraccia can submit KKK #1 runs in (if you can call lumbering and tripping the equivalent running) and gets Sbraccia DQed. Out comes Kinjiro Oki and Bill Irwin. So of all the bad US ideas to import over, they run the Nitro ending. If I wait long enough I think I will see a vulture, someone in the rafters, the mysterious locker room mirror, a limousine and a hummer. Did they just say that KKK's dad had cancer? Anyway, the sports entertainment portion of the tape continues as Knuckles gets on THE STICK! and tells Wally Yamaguchi (who must be the promoter of this mess) that they are tired of being screwed. Hang with me now. Yamaguchi agrees to a match right then and there between the two teams for the NWA tag titles (remember this; it's important.)

Cola Kid/Pepsi Boy vs. Knuckles Nelson/Eric Sbraccia: You saw this a thousand times during the old NWA shows on TBS. Impromptu match. Cola and Pepsi quickly lock the confused champs into dueling abdominal stretches. WE HAVE NEW CHAMPIONS! WE HAVE NEW CHAMPIONS!

Nelson/Sbraccia vs. Cola Kid/Pepsi Boy: Alright, the Brotherhood get their rematch. Hey, why don't Cola and Pepsi have the belts. Hey, Nelson and Sbraccia have them. WHAT?!?!?! They pulled a DUSTY FINISH! A textbook Dusty finish at that. I guess they clipped out the Japanese Jack Tunney coming out and declaring that this wasn't an officially sanctioned NWA match therefore the belt could not change hands. I also would like to state how business exposing it is to have Cola Kid and Pepsi Boy teaming together. I am supposed to believe that Douglas Ivester and Roger Enrico were sitting around talking-

Douglas Ivester: "We have been corporate rivals too long. I'm thinking that maybe we should consider a joint venture."

Roger Enrico: "Agreed. So what did you have in mind?"

DI: "Let's take this one step at a time. We need to start small in case the public isn't receptive to us."

RE: "No harm. No foul."

DI: "Exactly"

RE: "Do you have any ideas? I could form a committee."

DI: "There might not be any reason for that. I have an idea. Professional wrestling is really popular now."

RE: "Isn't that all fake?"

DI: "Never mind that. We could each have one representative and they could go around handing out free beverages, kissing babies, spreading goodwill. Yadda, Yadda, Yadda."

RE: "I like it but I don't know if we want to do it here in America. Too much publicity."
 DI: "Good point. They could always work from one of our foreign offices."
 RE: "Okay, anywhere in particular?"
 DI: "None immediately come to mind. You?"
 RE: "How about England or France?"
 DI: "Ummm, we aren't exactly popular over there right now."
 RE: "Sorry. How about Canada?"
 DI: "Do you actually expect them to put down the Molson long enough to care?"
 RE: "Point taken. What about Japan? I hear they have a big wrestling community there."
 DI: "That will work."

See, it makes no sense. If they would going to be forced to be partners, one should be subtly attacking the other. Cola Kid could threaten to make his opponents drink Crystal Pepsi while Pepsi Boy could say he would win a match quicker than it took to yank New Coke off the shelf. Oh well, the match isn't very good because three of the four guys aren't well skilled in the art of professional wrestling. Nelson ends up getting a sloppy pin that ends with him and Cola Boy in the missionary position. Sleazy indy wrestling.

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!@!@!@!@!@!@!@!@!Amerikkkan Pro Wrestling. 4/1999. Upstate SC.
 (FAT TONY GANCARSKI)

BEACH BLONDES VS K KRUSH and ICE PICK: YÖknow, I think K Krush is lip synching his opening rap. The heel commentator describes Crush and Pick as jabronies, which is very current. The toothless marks chant along with 10 punches in the corner on a Blonde, and it seems like one of the blondes has developed an erection. Heel commentator makes the wristlock/wristwatch reference, and he sounds like heÖs eating a codeine sundae. Kick. Punch. Kick. Punch. Belly smash from Ice Train. Kick. Punch. Tag. One of the Blondes is wobbly, playing heel in peril. And then K Krush pulls out a Michinoku Driver, out of nowhere. Follows up with a Guillotine Legdrop and misses; the Blondes go on offense with DDTs and so on. Everything here is indie as hell, but fine, until the workers spend ten seconds discussing how to time a spot to get a man from each team over the top rope at the same time for a double DDQ. MAC TRUCK (with The DUKE of NEW YORK) V MAGNUM JESSE TAYLOR: Hey! I had a flame war with the Duke once! Methodical offense, as they say, and it all looks really fake. A whole bunch of nothing until and including when Magnum goes over with a belly-to-belly.

ARMAGEDDON V. BUBBA CLYDE and SWEET DREAMS: Armageddon are two lardasses with Crimson Klan hoods on. Bubba Clyde is working the Cousin Junior gimmick, and Sweet Dreams is a black guy with actual muscle definition. The heel commentator, Rusty Riddle: "Looks like we got a liÖl salt and pepper going on here." The face commentator says that Bubba Clyde "doesnÖt look like he can work his way out of a paper bag," then adds "when it comes to math and English." Almost a shoot comment! Dreams gets hiptossed over the top to start, and itÖs clear that the brotherÖs gonna bump for the white boys, or could bump for them, but he tags out. Then we get about three minutes of elbows and shoulder blocks, and itÖs pretty nasty. Not much here, except some played out race cracks by Riddle.

CRUISER LEWIS V BACKSTREET SONNY STONE: Lewis is either working the fat biker gimmick, or it's just his lifestyle. Jean jacket with the sleeves cut off, a bandanna, and a black t-shirt underneath that says "I Dare You Baby". He comes out to Slow Ride by Foghat, and I make a mental note to dub this for Schneider. I'm shocked that Stone doesn't have a partner, perhaps something like N-Sync Johnny Black. Both men are blown up after climbing through the ropes. Exchange of waistlocks to start, then Lewis into a hammer lock. Stone reverses said hammerlock, whips Lewis into the ropes, and takes over with an array of kicks, punches, and slams. This is quite slow. They're pacing this to go ten! Lewis leaves the ring, comes back in, and works the same plodding brawling shit that the face worked for a bit. This promotion really needs a Rod Trongard on the mic, to hold things together.

SPECIAL FORCES and JOHNNY DOLLAR V. BAD COMPANY and BLACKJACK DALTON: This would be the Winner Gets A Claxton Fruitcake Match. This is not your father's Bad Company; no Tanaka and Diamond here, not even a PY Chu Hi to be found. BC and Dalton work the magic of armbars on Dollar for a while, until one of Bad Company hits Dalton for some reason. Requisite friction ensues. The video on the tape goes out for a bit and when I get a picture again one of Bad Company goes over with a flying bodypress.

BUBBY BURKE V TWISTED SISTER: Burke has this really nice Killer Brooks look going, I notice as he cheapshots TS in the jaw to start this one off. Sister comes back with some deep armdrags and a dropkick, and Burke bails. A lot of quick exchanges here, but this is fucked up by the worst selling I've seen in some time. Alternately delayed and anticipatory, it took even this unsophisticated crowd plumb out of the match.

ARMAGEDDON V JASON DAVIS and LIGHTNING LEE STORM: Armageddon is not afraid to wear Dickies over their tights. One of them has a belt - a real leather one, with an actual buckle. Armageddon on offense early with doubleteams from the Edna Garrett school of wrestling - mincing slaps and delicate clotheslines from the two heart attack candidates who make the Awesome Kongs look like Footloose. I'm bereft of hope. One of Armageddon whips Storm into the ropes, and misses a big boot by six inches. Gee, if I keep writing about matches like this, I'll have turned the DVDVR into a parody of itself. The fat boys go over.

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IWA Japan- Battle Anchor Puroresu 9/24/98 FINAL ORIENTAL MYSTERY TOUR Taped 9/7/98 Tokyo Korakuen Hall.
(DEAN RASMUSSEN)

I trade METRIC ASS-LOADS of tapes with all-around good Egg Mike Lorefice- And he isn't afraid to send me a huge wad of tapes- AND HE'LL BRING THE MOTHERFUCKING INDIE DUMPSTER OF SLEAZE for me and all the Playboys to joyously roll around in. his last batch BLEW MY MIND because it was SO chockful of Indie GREATNESS that I wept Love's Easy Tears and decided to use this holiday to review the BEGINNING of the stuff that had me the MOST stoked. God know's that NOONE loves IWA Japan more than me- it is what I look for in

Non-BattlARTS indies: Astoundingly washed-up, lumpy wrestlers at the top; An undercard filled with Good Or Interesting matches- underrated awkward or awesome junior matches; a sleeper Joshi Match that will give a youngster a shot to show what she's got, and pathetic Indie mooks landing real wrong on their shoulders for my pleasure- and it is very pleasing. This was pretty close to perfect on one of these and pretty horrendous on another. Let's quickly blow through the CODENAME: HORRENDOUS.

All the matches I actually wanted to see were clipped to nothing in SamuraiTV's neverending quest to make me hate it's stinkin' guts. YAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

Tortuga/ Hiroki Achiwa vs. Yoshiya Yamashita/ Yuji Kito: I love matches like this. There is a REAL chance that I've reviewed... oh I dunno... fourteen Yamashita matches, but I'll always say that he is a rookie and I've never seen him before. Yes, if he's in this and he ain't wearing a turtle suit and racking himself on the top rope, I ain't gonna remember him next year when jobs to Osamu Tachihikari in a SPWF undercard match that will be as clipped all to hell as this. One of these guys pins Tortuga so I guess they aren't actually rookies or anything, though they sure aren't very polished if they ain't. Hey! I'll give Schneider a call and we'll get the Boston Idol Bible Of Sleazy Indies book that the Sexy and Dynamic Idol sent a while back. Hold on.
~!~

(An actual verbatim conversation)

DEAN: PHIL! Get the book...

PHIL: Oh okay...

DEAN: Go to IWA Japan. (waiting, waiting) What does Yoshiya Yamashita look like ?

PHIL: His head is really big. There isn't much space between the bottom lip and eyebrow. He's all disproportionate. You're typing this, eh...

DEAN: Oh (expletive deleted) yeah, What does Yuji Kito look like?

PHIL: Like... long eye-brows, very long eyebrows. Flattened nose. A sorta buzz cut like Kurt Warner's wife. A soft undefined chin.

DR: So he's really attractive.

PHIL: You're trying to make me look like a freak. He's a very attractive man. The English words next to his name is "Easy To Dance".

DR: What does THAT mean?

PHIL: I dunno. That's about all for him.

DR: Look up Keizo Matsuda. He's the owner guy right? (Post Phonecall NOTE: Actually, I think Yamada is owner boy as I look back now in hindsight, in anger, n sync, INXS...)

PHIL: He's got zits on his face. He's got a big poofy bowl cut. A small contemptuous mouth.

DEAN: You find that sexy...

PHIL: Well, if not for the zits on his face. Next to his name it says "Voice Of America."

DEAN: Allright, I'll call you if I need anything else.

PHIL: Okay...

(Endless Rambling about resurrection of Nitro Workrate Report deleted)

Tortuga does the job to the undefined chin of Yuji Kito. Of the meager clips is Yamashita hitting a quite uninspiring Shoulder Bulldog. Tortuga looked peppy for a guy putting over such a

generic tagteam and being grouped with such a generic partner. But it's clipped so who can tell fudge-all?

Emi Motokawa/ Sachie Nishibori vs. Miho Watabe/ Keiko Aono (LLPW team): I REALLY wanted to see ALL of this, being one of the initial EMI~!-bandwagoneers and I think this is the last Nishibori match as she retired around this time just as she was getting to approach the Tim Whitehead List Of Hot Joshi Puroresu Babes- what with her coming into her womanliness and what have you. I LOVE Miho Watabe. According to the MEGA-GREAT Miko site (<http://www.cherrybabe.com/>)- a site so swank that actually has a way to match up the incomprehensible new JWP names with the old names- says that Miho is FOUR FEET EIGHT INCHES tall. Y'know folks, if she were in Mexico, she be wrestling as Mini Martha Villalobocito. Either way, you gotta love her fighting spirit and jumpy flippy style. This is clipped to death, but it does show EMI taking it to the air and getting the win with a freaky Rings Of Saturn variation. HEY! TO HELL WITH SAMURAI TV!

The Great Takeru vs. Hidetomo Egawa (Moebius): Egawa looks pretty nifty in the fourteen seconds or so that they show of this match- hitting some neat suplexes and going all submissions and matwork for the highlight reel. He's on the sleazy indie BattlARTs-approximation bandwagon- what with the tiny pants, manly kicks to the face and sexy leather boots. Takeru gets in some well-executed lowgrade highspots and a really choice Brainbuster for the duke. Takeru is too good to be called the Male Cooga, but I'd have to see more than this to go any further with any more praise. SAMURAI TV's mom wears army shoes.

Akinori Tsukioka/ Katsumi Hirano vs. Takashi Sato/ Keizo Matsuda: TSUKIOKA IS CLIPPED! Awww Fuck you to hell, SAMURAI TV! This is preposterously clipped down to Akinori hitting bunches from his INSANE flying arsenal- including the AMAZINGLY dangerous and idiotic Moonsault of the top of the closed bleachers onto Sato who is lying on a pile of chairs on the gym floor. Tsukioka RULES. BAAH!

Kabuki Intai Jiai Taisensha Kettei Tournament (Loreface and his smarty pants canji reading! That kid! So yes, I have no idea what this means.:)) Akinori Tsukioka vs. Keisuke Yamada: This looked like it would be really fucking great if it wasn't clipped to NOTHING. The Moonsault off the balcony onto Yamada coated in chairs was FUCKING GREAT. Yamada looks like a good little worker but who can tell from these clipped matches.

Keizo Matsuda vs. Shigeo Okumura: This was mercifully clipped and had the pungent look and feel of two non-Kitahara WAR heavyweights going at it half-assed New Japan style. But who can tell. Maybe it five and a half stars and we'll never know of it's innate beauty.

Shigeo Okumura vs. Keisuke Yamada: Yamada shows in the minute clips of this that he is at least a big bump and blade freak- which will get you a little too far here in Death Valley Land. He uses Samurai TV editing to escape a second rope Tombstone Piledriver (GEEZ! I don't wanna know.) Yamada with a I-own-the-company Roll-up Hold at 9:48!

The Great Kabuki/ Keizo Matsuda vs. Masao Orihara/ Z-P: This is the first of three Kabuki retirement matches. I thought Kabuki sucked when I was twelve and he was managed by Gary Hart in Texas. Imagine my chagrin when- 21 years later- I get this entire match en lieu of two Akinori Tsukioka matches. Actually, despite the fact this match is chockfull of landmines that should have made it suck, it's actually a decent little wrestling match. Matsuda is a poorman's Masato Tanaka but he's actually getting a lot better in his execution of moves, can really work for a lummoxy Indie Heavyweight guy and he thankfully sells. Orihara leans into Kabuki's kicks to make them look like they hurt, does a Moonsault to NOWHERE into a bunch of chairs- which was a nice touch. Z-P is the Moebius guy with the AAA 95 youngster big preposterous outfit who is decent enough of a worker. Add it up and you've got a decent wrestling match. Matsuda blows the ending roll-up but he actually made this match watchable- especially at the end where he and Z-P trade some nifty high-impact finishers to pull off your garden variety hot Puroresu Break-A-Skull-And-Kick-Out ending.

The Great Kabuki vs. Keisuke Yamada: Kabuki puts over Yamada as is tradition in Japan unless you are as repellently self-absorbed as Onita, Chosyu or Onita. The match itself is a very Mid-Atlantic 1975 with lowgrade spots and punches as transitions and stuff. Actual Mid-Atlantic had deeper psychology, of course, since this match is devoid of the matwork that Mid-Atlantic used to create the body of the match. Yamada isn't gonna be able to wrestle THAT level of Old School successfully- I mean it is a 24 year old as opposed to Kendo Nagasaki or something- so this isn't good or anything. Yamada still doesn't repulse me even though pushing yourself to the top of your own promotion is usually enough for me to hate you. Unless you are Ultimo Dragon, the Great Sasuke, Chigusa Nagoya... oh wait...

KABUKI GRAND FINAL: The Great Kabuki/Terry Funk/ Doug Gilbert vs. Freddy Krueger/ Leatherface/ Metalface: The highlight of this match was seeing Eddie Gilbert's basically forgotten brother, Doug, try to instill some wrestling into this- as he takes it to the mat with a little Puerto Rican guy with Freddy Kreuger mask on. Doug even Honmas a batch of blood from furrowing his brow too hard or something. Leatherface's valet is blowing the roof off the Slutty, Hot Valet-a-meter. AHH! My achin' funny parts! Kabuki gets the pin by- to channel David Crockett- "Omigod! Kuh-BOOK-KEE USED THE MEEIST! KUHBOOKEE USED THE MEEIST!" The rest of this sucked as much as you thought it would- with the hackneyed crappy lowgrade wrestling, non-existent psychology and all-around poopiness- and it reminds of the same reasons why most W*ING is unwatchable. And this didn't even have the W*ING vicarious thrill of the possibility of someone having something really horrible done to them with fire and barbed-wire. The highlights of the clipped-to-fuck matches looked pretty interesting and fun. All the stuff that made it unscathed from the editor's floor ranges from okay to pretty stinky. I'd go with.....

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+|+|+|+|+|+ Battle Anchor Puroresu IWA Japan 9/18/99 AGGRESIVE WARRIORS TOUR '98 (Taped 7/20/98) Tokyo Korakuen Hall
(DEAN RASMUSSEN)
(This would be CODENAME: WATCHABLE! of the two IWA Japan tapes I'm a reviewing.)

Yuji Kito/ Yoshiya Yamashita vs. Tortuga/ Hiroki Achiwa: HEY! It's this match again! My cyber-nipples are virtually hard. Actually, this was fun. Tortuga makes with the wrestling comedy jokes and they do the great spot where Tortuga talks the ref into tope-ing the disproportionate face and yellow pants of Yamashita (though Tortuga's partner looks a lot more like Schneider's description of Yamashita). Either way, all four of these are actually very proficient wrestlers when you get them off the editor's cutting floor- lowgrade highflying juniors that can work a match more than land on their heads. They can sell, they can work, they seem to have a future in the sport if they all keep at it, I got no beef. After Tortuga's comedy spots die down, they begin working on Achiwa's (I'm saying it's actually Yamashita's) back and Yuji Kito does two toprope Double Kneedrops that looked super nasty before stretching the bejeebers out of Tortuga's partner with big deep Boston Crab and the KITO PUSH CONTINUES!

Cosmic Soldier vs. Hidetomo Egawa: Egawa takes a pretty big bump from a big dropkick knocking him off the top turnbuckle to the floor. Cosmic does his neato tope with a somersault and takes out four rows of chairs. Mix in some comical shootstyle approximations (without the kicking or credible looking submissions) and you've pretty much got this match in a nutshell. Maybe I lobbied too hard to get young Cosmic Soldier so high on our 500. The call is under review!

Freddy Krueger vs. Katsumi Hirano: Oh this sucked as much as you thought it would. Hirano looks like one of those Karate guys that Leon Spink would job to in the early days of FMW- what with the bad bleachjob, the gi, the workrate of a drunken Tommy Rich. I do get a really unsettling kick out of seeing Freddy Krueger take it to the mat TWICE in one day. I guess your gimmick is too goofy if it looks stupid when you actually try to wrestle- and THIS is THAT. There is deeply flawed logic in this match- as Hirano makes me bust out laughing as he does all these comical arm-submissions to set up the big submission at the end, but just kinda hits a Jim Powers-Era Clothesline and we call a crappy end to a shitty match! WOO-HOO!

Asian Cougar/ Palomino vs. Akinori Tsukioka/ Kyohei Mikami: Man, Asian Cougar motherfucking rocks. If I remember Doron Diamond's review of the ASTOUNDINGLY coveted DDT tournament correctly, Mikami is the one that he said was the most exciting and promising of the whole crew (his home page isn't up and it's not on the board anymore, so don't think I don't research these...things... NERTZ!) Anyway, this match alone is a really good reason to get this tape: Asian Cougar and Palomino are a super fabulous tagteam- with Cougar bringing the TRULY Psycho highspots and all kindsa hurty high impact spots to fill time between doing something fucking insane. Palomino is more Lucha Traditionalist- but he is also a lot better in this than when I last saw him (BattlARTS for some reason). The fact that Mikami blows these two away- AND blows away freaking true indy basketcase Akinori Tsukioka- thrilled and delighted me. Mikami is really really graceful- a Great Sasuke-level graceful I would venture to say- and he shows it in the little things- a beautiful standing hurricanrana, a botched but beautiful toprope Rana. Plus he isn't afraid to DIE for YOU, taking Asian Cougar's fucked-up over the toprope legdrop like a man. You figured that this match is gonna rock, as the first spot is Akinori and Mikami landing right on their heads on the floor to set the SWANKY double Tope Con Hilos to crush the unmasked guys dead. Asian Cougar gets the madest phattest air as he

crushes Tsukioka like a bug, taking out two rows of chairs. From there, Mikami and Palomino run the ropes luch-style as the bounce and flip and counter in and out of armdrags until Palomino gets the Quebradora (specs: Spinning Backbreaker) and holds Mikami in the back breaker position as Asian Cougar flies over the top with a Springboard Guillotine Legdrop- which was timed beautifully and looked painful as hell. This leads up to Palomino dragging Mikami's head and shoulders over to the edge of the apron so Cougar can kill the holy fudge out of Mikami with another legdrop- this one over the toprope to the floor. Mikami takes it like a total freak by landing directly on his head off the apron. Akinori freaks out and kicks Asian Cougar out to the floor and does the ASAI MOONSAULT TO NOWHERE- going stomach first into a batch of chairs. This was the first two minutes. This match motherfucking ROCKED. To continue the Hurricane-level Of Rock- they MIRROR the Legdrop Sequence with a Senton Sequence- starting with Follow-The-Leader-Style Springboard Sentons by AC and Pally onto Tsukioka in the ring to set up Palomino dragging Tsukioka to the floor and young Akinori taking Asian Cougar's over the top rope Senton While Young Akinori is Coat With A Bunch Of Chairs- and he takes the full brunt of the psychotic Asian Cougar like a TRUE IDIOT. It looked pretty fricking NASTY. From here it goes all backwards as they calm down on the big wacky highspots and go at it in the ring with cool and well-executed in-ring spots- a batch of Akinori Falcon arrow based Kanyonisms, some REALLY nice ranas by Mikami, oddly stiff lariats all around- all leading up to Mikami and Palomino taking it to the mat. This is a cool wrinkle to the match: Akinori tags in and hits a Powerbomb and a second rope moonsault to tag out and let Mikami go all Minoru Tanaka-like with the Leg Submission which leads to a Figure Four by Mikami. I'm definately sold on about everybody in this match. Palomino sells the leg like a true Japan Average Indie guy (like he just escaped a headlock) and he and Mikami go into a big extended reversals out of Suplex Predicaments, showing great feats of agility all around with Mikami finally making Palomino look like a comically masked Toshiaki Kawada by taking a German right on his head. From here, Mikami and Palomino do every Lucha and Puroresu roll-up they can think off- and Mikami does the coolest variations, actually using a Triangle Hold to get a roll-up: a neato variation on the big Lucha Roll-Up Into A Submission that the BattlARTS Boys created. And so this mutha goes BROADWAY! and you and I both love it. Good Good Good little match.

YOUNG GENERATION WOMEN'S BATTLE FOR Jr ALL STAR: Emi Motokawa/ Sumie Sakai/ Sachie Nishibori vs. Momoe Nakanishi/ Nanae Takahashi/ Miho Wakizawa: If you needed ANOTHER reason to get this tape, take a look at the coolness of this match: Momoe and Miho- the future from AJW along with the much more limited Nanae take on the Divine EMI~! and my and your fave Judo Girl- Sumie Sakai along with since retired and much more womanly Nishibori. I always expect more from these matches than if they are the same line-up on an AJW or J'd card. Here, a youngster with something to prove can show her whole arsenal, wrestle outside of what the matriarch of her home promotion demands and show another side to her repertoire (see At-The-Time Schoolgirl-fetish-Midnight-Choker poster girl yumi Fukawa bring the Economy Sized ASS-KICK to Emi in Yumi's proto-ARSION coming out match in IWA). This match doesn't ever reach that level of transcendence, as this pretty much plays it safe. It does have a lot of nice moments after they pair up after a bunch of goofy six-gal comedy spots. Nanae needs to lose the no-selling already, but she did work pretty well with the luchacized Nishibori- taking her ranas and roll-ups well and being an all-around Aja-larvae. Sakai and

Momoe were really good in together, trading suplexes and Judo throws- with Momoe finding lots of openings for nutty in-ring high-flying. Sakai and Miho also had a fun little bit of singles action with Miho's Yamada/Hasegawa-inspired stylings. Overall, the highspots were pretty much all blown, there wasn't enough stiffness, or enough desire to breakout in this match by Momoe, Miho or Sakai; and they just played the whole thing to close to the vest. There was a hot ending part that did the AJW thing of breaking down into WAAAY too many finishers not actually finishing the match- but Emi hit the most spots the most cleanly to make the ending sections work as well as they did- making with the tricky Joshi reversals, big suplexes, counters and roll-ups. Overall, this was a perfectly fine match but nothing that makes me wanna freak out like I wanted to.

Takashi Sato/ The Great Takeru vs. Masao Orihara/ Takeshi Ono (Tonpachi Machine Guns): They are Actually called the TONPACHI MACHINE GUNS?!?! These two are the coolest wrestlers on earth- except they- y'know- suck as an actual in-ring tagteam. Orihara is quite a crappy shooter, a has-been highflyer and all-around bitter washed-up indie guy who plays that role really well. He's got that whole "wasted talent wallowing in the hell he has created for himself" thing going, so we all can identify a whole bunch with him. He was hot has Hell before succumbing to SOMETHING to make him pretty much Big Japanese Two Pariah in the Nineties and he can count his great matches since the Lyger/EI Samurai vs Dragon/Orihara match (in 1992) on TWO fingers (the fucking AWESOME Orihara/Yasuraoka WAR Independent Jr Title match and Ohtani/Orihara from TOSP 1999). Takeshi Ono is pretty crappy at anything but straight mainline BattlARTS style- where his strengthes (punching people really hard in the face, being a real dick) are really fully utilized. When he tags with Orihara, they kinda become a thinner version of Gedo and Jado- which ain't helping noone. Actually, think of Orihara and Ono as the thinner, amazing stylish Gedo and Jado. Takashi Sato (don't believe the matchlists! Believe me! SCHNEIDER describing from Holy Idol Indie Book: "Hair over the eyes like Veronica Lake. Long phallic nose..." Yep! I rock...) is a decent enough IWA midcard guy I guess- kinda spunky, kinda stiff. Takeru has this horrendous new outfit on and it stinks! This match was a basic squash with Ono and Orihara doing some baffling horrible double team moves, assorted low-blows, flipping the bird to the rubes, blue hair by Orihara, super lowgrade brawling by ori-hara- and that ain't no good.

Keisuke Yamada/Keizo Matsuda vs. The Great Kabuki/Kendo Nagasaki: This should have sucked more than it did. Kabuki and Kendo Nagasaki are kicking Fujiwara's ass in the Dissected Old Farts Who Won't Go Away Dept. Yamada and Matsuda are IWA Japan Heavyweights... IWA JAPAN HEAVYWEIGHTS, PEOPLE! Mix it all together and you get- well- a very okay match actually. Kendo and Kabuki take you to San Juan, Puerto Rico 1979 and show the youngsters watching how they did matches in the old days, as they work on Matsuda's arm for the whole first section using arm-bars and Pressure Holds and other stuff that is nice to see in this day and age- especially if you were also brought up seeing Steve Muzzlin and Don Kernoodle take it to the mat Carolina Style. Yamada tags in and he's a peck of spastic fun as he works WAAAY too stiff for these old geezers and Nagasaki shows his displeasure by potatoing the living fuck out of Owner Boy and elbowing him right out of the ring- a spot that will make milk fly out of your nose if you are drinking it at the time. Yamada hits all these new

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UFC6 - Tank Abbott v John Matua (6'2 400lbs Kapu-Kui-Aluao) - Matua is an enormous Samoan representing the martial art sometimes known as 'Samoan Bone Breaking'. Tank Abbott is introduced as a Pit Fighter, a nebulous term that really means nothing in traditional martial-arts circles. Generally when a fighter represents one of these unorthodox 'fringe' arts

(Trapfighting, SAFTA, JoSonDo, etc), you can count on a rapid ass-whipping, and that's exactly what we got in this match. But it was the pudgy Tank who was doing all the ass-whipping, as he charged straight at the giant Samoan and started winging huge haymaker punches. Matua tried to strike back, but Tank landed often enough to keep his scrambling and off-balance. Tank catches Matua trying to climb off the canvas and lands a clubbing right hand that topples the larger man to the mat. Just for good measure, Tank dives on Matua and lands a final punch on his unconscious opponent before the referee can pull him off. Matua lays motionless on the mat, his arms and legs extended stiffly indicating spinal shock as a result of Tank's powerful punching. Abbott notices this, and splays his own arms out in grotesque parody of Matua's injuries. In the post-match interview, Abbott grins at UFC announcer and 1984 Olympic Gold-medalist Jeff Blatnik and gives his analysis - "Cakewalk, baby."

UFC6 - Tank Abbott v Paul Varelans (6'8 300lbs Trapfighting) - Well gee, pitfighting v trapfighting in a battle of two bastard martial arts. Varelans advanced to the second round of this tournament by virtue of a slugfest knockout of TKD practitioner Cal Worsham. Tank wastes no time in swarming the larger Varelans, bloodying his nose before taking him to the mat. With Varelans' head trapped against the Octagon fence, Tank grabs the chain-link and uses his knee to grind Varelans' face into a blood pulp. And he's GRINNING at the crowd as he does this. After the match is stopped (Varelans protests, claiming he was willing to absorb more punishment and setting a trend that will last his entire career), Tank watches the video at ringside with Jeff Blatnik and basks in his brutality - "You'd better stop that, I'm starting to get sexually aroused" Tank says while viewing Varelans' punishment. The legend of Tank Abbott was launched with this one quip as assuredly as Austin 3:16 launched another career in another sport.

UFC6 - Tank Abbott v Oleg Taktarov (6' 220lbs Sambo) - Taktarov advances to the finals by virtue of a bizarre semi-final match. Pat Smith, who won his opening round fight against Rudyard Moncayo, withdrew due to intestinal cramping. Smith's replacement was tabbed as Anthony "Mad Dog" Macias, who is best known for being tossed around like a luchadore by Dan Severn at UFC5. Macias and Taktarov had been training together prior to this match, which made the result even more suspicious as Macias charged with a double-leg takedown right into a Taktarov guillotine choke to end the fight in under 30 seconds. Oleg is daisy-fresh going into his fight with Abbott, an issue Tank would address is his own style later. The match, a UFC marathon for those days (15 minutes), highlighted Taktarov's fearless style and rudimentary boxing skills; Tank would close and throw the right, Taktarov would duck and grab the waistlock. When the match goes to the ground, Oleg uses his guard to tire and frustrate the bigger man, and finally sinks in the rear-naked choke for the tapout after a classic struggle. Oleg would go on to spend the night in the hospital for observation, but Tank had other plans for his evening. After some drinking at the hotel, Abbott and his entourage encountered Pat Smith, the man who withdrew from fighting Taktarov, in an elevator. Tank expressed displeasure at Smith's withdrawal leaving Oleg an easy fight with Macias, and let Smith know it, "Tank Style", as Smith is hospitalized following a beatdown by Tank and company. The martial-arts world wonder if anybody could beat Tank in the closed confines of an elevator, and Tank Abbott is entrenched as the loose cannon bad boy of the American MMA scene.

In his first UFC appearance, Abbott showed devastating power with both hands, but paltry few actual boxing skills. Abbott loads up on his big right hand and relies on wide, powerful brawler's punches, all thrown from the heel. He demonstrated no jab or competent footwork to speak of, but his intensity and fearlessness compensated for these technical shortcomings.

UFC 95 - Tank Abbott v Steve Jennum (6'1 225 Ninjitsu) - Steve Jennum is best known as a UFC footnote - the least deserving UFC champion ever when he replaced Royce Gracie in the finals of UFC when Gracie was unable to continue after his match with Kimo. Jennum defeated Harold Howard by strikes to win the strap, fighting only one match in the 8-man tournament. Jennum entered UFC4 and won his match against boxer Melton Bowen, but suffered a concussion in the process and withdrew from the tournament. The announcers note that Jennum is a police officer in his home state of Nebraska, and that this match is every cop's worst fear - unarmed against a two-fisted killing machine like the Tank. But HEY, Jennum represents the ancient and mysterious art of NINJITSU, and longtime Death Valley Driver readers should remember how much credibility THAT should give Jennum! Tank closes the distance immediately and grabs Jennum without throwing a single punch. From here Tank uses his size and aggression to repeat his performance against Varelans, grinding Jennum's face into the steel cage with a wicked grin plastered on his face. UFC cameramen have an excellent shot of Jennum's beet-faced agony as the chain link presses against his mug. Realizing the hopelessness of his situation, Jennum taps out, ninjitsu-style. Tank goes on to the next round of the UFC megatournament, while Jennum leaves the UFC and is never heard from again on any significant level. If you're driving through Nebraska and get pulled over by Officer Jennum, mention that you thought Tank was cheating and maybe you'll get out of a ticket. Or tell the truth, admit that he sucks as a fighter, and take your ticket like a man (or assertive woman).

UFC 95 - Tank Abbott v Dan Severn (6'2 250lbs wrestling) - Severn wins his quarterfinal match against Paul Varelans with one of the rare submissions of Severn's career. This match really exposes the one-dimensional nature of both fighters, as Severn, the world-class grappler, takes Abbott to the mat and gets his back. But having gained this advantageous position, Severn shows his total lack of striking skills as he is unable to inflict any significant damage on the Tank. Slapping away fruitlessly for a 30-minute judges decision, Severn displays great stamina and an admirable ability to "ride", but little else. Abbott, meanwhile, showed a willingness to absorb punishment and just how limited he is when his striking ability is taken away from his gameplan. Abbott would show up at the next UFC unhumbled, and claim that he had a nightmare that he was "raped" by Freddie Mercury at the Ultimate Ultimate.

UFC 8 - UFC 8 emanated from Bayamon Puerto Rico, and Abbott was in attendance as a guest of the UFC. Naturally with all the fighting going on in the Octagon, Tank felt left out. So when Alan Goes, a respected BJJ fighter attending in support of Joe Moreira (A Brazilian fighter who lost in an upset to Paul Varelans) looked at Tank cross-eyed, that was all the encouragement he needed. Tank and Goes brawled in the ringside crowd before being separated by security. Tank is "suspended" by the UFC after this incident and misses UFC9 and 10.

In the interim, Tank continues to further his "bad boy" image by being thrown in jail for a brutal beating laid on one of his purportedly best friends in Huntington Beach. The charges are dropped after Tank and his friend make up, but these kinds of occurrences are commonplace for Tank, now a major UFC celebrity for his ass-kicking, in-your-face style of fighting and interviewing. When one of the WCW workers complains about Tank "believing his gimmick", they would do well to read this column. That ain't no gimmick.

UFCXI - Tank Abbott v Scott Ferozzo (5'10 350lbs Pitfighting) - Abbott beats his first-round opponent, boxer Sam Adkins, easily with strikes on the ground. But Tank faces a new challenger in the semi, when UFC8 veteran Scott Ferozzo enters as an alternate. Ferozzo, also a brawler by nature, is shorter and wider than Tank, and uses his football experience to duck under Tank's haymakers and drive him against the fence. With his head down, Ferozzo is shielded from the force of Tank's power, and occasionally steps back from the fence to exchange some flurries with Tank, with both men landing. Here some more flaws in Tank's armor become apparent; while Abbott is undoubtedly a powerful puncher, he is not, in the boxing vernacular, a "crisp" puncher, a man who can ring your bell with a short, quick blow. Tank's power is "heavy" power, where his blows are slower, but pack more impact by virtue of his immense strength (Abbott has been known to bench press more than 500lbs). Against Ferozzo, who offers a similar package of ability, Tank looks small and ineffectual. Ferozzo wins the judges decision, but Tank is unbowed, citing a knee injury which hampered his mobility. Ferozzo withdraws from the tournament as well, leaving the winner of the other bracket, Mark Coleman, without an opponent for the final round of UFCXI. Even the alternates are used up, and so Coleman becomes the first UFC champion to actually win by default.

UFC96 - Tank Abbott v Cal Worsham (5'11 230lb TKD) - Worsham is best known as the chump who fell to Paul Varelans in the first round of UFC6. After a tour of Brazil, Worsham returned to the UFC with a win over Zane Frazier, after which he laughingly demanded to be given "Superfight" status. The next best thing, I guess, is to be invited to the "Ultimate Ultimate", the UFC's tournament of champions. In that light, I suppose that Tank serves as some sort of "gift" from the promoters. Abbott closes the distance and forces the smaller man to the fence. Then, in the kind of action you'll only see in a Tank Abbott fight, Tank hefts Worsham like a child and attempts to throw him over the Octagon fence and into the first row of photographers! Jennum hangs on for dear life with a front headlock, firing some ineffectual desperation punches to the top of Tank's head, until Tank gives up on the "Worsham toss for distance" and slams the helpless Marine to the mat (Tank has performed this identical slam in WCW; it looks much more impressive when the opponent is trying vainly not to be slammed). Worsham takes the guard and actually throws a few effective punches before tapping out. As the referee pulls Abbott off, he lands one last cheap shot on Worsham's crew-cut mug. Worsham, who just seconds earlier had been tapping like Liza Minelli on crank, leaps to his feet and DEMANDS that the referee disqualify Abbott for his late hit. When this doesn't happen, he begs the referee to file a formal protest. Abbott celebrates with the middle finger and walks off.

UFC96 - Tank Abbott v Steve Nelmark (6'3 240 Karate) - Nelmark enters the tournament as an alternate for Ken Shamrock who suffered (yet another) injury in his first-round victory

(Shamrock gives an interview at the event where he challenges Tank Abbott to fight him at the next UFC, then promptly quits the UFC to sign with the WWF). Nelmark is a physically imposing figure who espouses his devotion to weight training in his pre-match interview. Abbott, impressed with neither his physique nor the art of karate, swarms Nelmark with wild, powerful blows as the karate fighter tries desperately to cover up from the onslaught. With a massive right cross, Abbott connects flush with Nelmark's temple, crumpling him to the mat with his head awkwardly pinned at a bizarre angle against the chain link fence, completely unconscious and helpless. This fight, plus the Matua fight from UFC6, should be played everytime Tank walks to a WCW ring. Abbott demonstrates that he still possesses frightening power and unmatched intensity in the Octagon.

UFC96 - Tank Abbott v Don Frye (6'1 215lb boxing/wrestling) - A truly remarkable fight featuring one of the most well-rounded fighters in UFC history, Don Frye, the UFC8 tournament champion. Tank, of course, never saw Frye win his title, because he was being taken from the premises for his extracurricular fighting in the audience. In one of the greatest tests of will ever witnessed by this writer, Frye stands toe-to-toe with the bigger Tank and throws deadly leather. Abbott lands the harder blows, but Frye still stands in there and counter back with solid shots of his own. Here's where Tank's "heavy" power became a detriment, as the well-schooled Frye is able to roll with the slower punches as dissipate their deadly power. Tank still manages to press the action with his punching, when he suddenly slips on the canvas and falls to his knees. Frye quickly seizes control of the situation, leaping on Tank's back and "putting the hooks in" before working clear on a rear-naked choke for the tap-out and the title. One of the ten best fights I've ever seen, and well worth another look on your DVD/VCR ShootComp#1.

UFCXII - Tank Abbott serves as a color commentator for the heavyweight finals, where Scott Ferrozzo is pitted against a newcomer from the Carlson Gracie camp, Vitor Belfort. Abbott shows disdain to Ferrozzo, mocking him as "the rotund one", but nonetheless picking him to beat the 210lb Belfort; "Roy Jones ain't gonna knock out Mike Tyson", he opines. Belfort slaughters Ferrozzo with a dramatic flurry of crisp straight punches that leave the bigger man kneeling on the mat covering his head.

UFCXIII - Tank Abbott v Vitor Belfort (6' 215lbs boxing/BJJ) - The match that had to be made, featuring two of the most explosive strikers in MMA. Both men rush out to meet each other and grapple standing. Abbott bulls Belfort back and almost throws him over his hip, but Belfort shows great balance and doesn't go down. Vitor lands that first flashing right, stunning Tank, who dissolves into wild brawler mode. Belfort's hand speed is too much for an unskilled boxer like Tank to handle, and each miss by Tank results in two counterpunches from Belfort's powerful hands. Tank winds up turtled up on his stomach, like Ferrozzo, when the referee stops the fight in under a minute. Humbled for the first time in his fighting career, Tank seeks out Belfort and hugs him in the Octagon.

Tank remained a popular figure who SEG (the UFC promoters) could call on to generate fan interest and PPV buys, but after this loss to Belfort, Tank's days as a top-flight fighter were gone. He was called in to substitute for Mark Coleman against defending UFC Champion

Several months later, Abbott debuted in WCW with no build-up or promotion in front of a crowd of wrestling fans who were oblivious to who he was or what he accomplished as a fighter. This appearance went so well that he promptly disappeared for 6 months before re-debuting in an atrocious slap-fight against Meng, again with no build-up or promotion to the fans. Abbott has thus far only established that he can demolish known jobrones like Jerry Flynn and Virgil/Curly Bill/Shane, but without any video footage to prove his awesome background as a human concussion machine, it will be difficult to get him over with the fans as anything other than a fat guy who can punch. And that strikes me as a pity, because Tank Abbott actually DID the things that pseudo-toughguys like Steve Austin brag about, and he'd be more than happy to talk about it, if given a chance. Better yet, he probably be more than happy to give you a demonstration, if he can find any volunteers. Maybe Hulk Hogan could have a "going away" match that would actually result in him going away.

ROCK-N-ROLL EXPRESS V. RISING SUNS w/ JJ DILLON- (tony gancarski) :Often, I get into arguments about why foreign wrestlers aren't used well, or sometimes at all, by US promotions. Former Crupies would write and ask me my opinion on Kaientai's chances of getting over in the WWF, or they'd ask what I thought about Kaz Hayashi. I love all of them, of course. But folks forget that wrestling bookers are largely dumb men booking a product for even dumber fans. Some folks still believe that the Koloffs were Russians, that Dusty Rhodes is really a common man, and so forth. I thought about what I'd write about for this week. Sure, Sasuke V Credible would be a hoot, and any of the Mutoh stuff in CWF would work. But I thought it most appropriate to write about US promotions' essential cluelessness vis-a-vis Japanese workers by writing about a match that included two masked, bodysuited jobbers who could've been billed

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for the time with a romero special, a powerbomb, and a face jam powerbomb, being used by Masami, and lots of dropkicks and deep arm drags by Komatsu. However Devil (who sucked just as much back then) worked a really ponderous style, stalling like Grandma Shinzaki. If they were going to make an effort to get Joshi Puroresu over in Saskatoon, you would think they would try to work the fast paced style that would make it unique. The Jumping Bomb Angels were actually over in the same time period using that strategy, however Devil brings everything down into her suck hole, delivering a match which was only the third best of a four match show.

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NICK BOCKWINKEL/HARLEY RACE vs. STAN HANSEN/BRUISER BRODY (AJ 1/85, Tokyo Korakuen Hall): So if you had to highlight a wrestler you were never particularly fond of, what kind of match would you want? Right, the kind where he gets years beaten off of his lifespan! "Nick, meet Stan and Frank!" ;) TV opens with Nick hitting a backdrop on Stan. He tries to work on him some more, but Stan picks him up and passes him off to Brody like a giant baton. Race and Nick double-team Brody and Nick whips him to the ropes, only for Brody to come back with a Pete Gogolak 50-yarder to Nick's gut. Race tags in and hits the VERTICAL SUPLEX OF CRUSHING DOOM on Hansen, but Hansen comes back with the AWA elbow to Race's trachea. Nick tags back in, ducks a chop from Brody and hits the most out-of-control Thesz Press you've ever seen- downright Psicosisian for a 50-year-old. Race tags in and hits the Afroturf Headbutt on Brody, but Hansen tags back in and they down Race with a double-shoulderblock. Race gets worked over for a long time until Brody downs him with a dropkick and signals for the King Kong Kneedrop, at which point Nick rakes his back to break the move up. Hansen replies by nuking Hansen against the ropes, and all four brawl on the floor with chairs until Joe calls for the DCOR. Nick preposterously runs over with streamers to

choke out Hansen with, but Hansen gets the last laugh as he hits Nick from 15 feet away with a howitzer of a chairshot on the way out. Nick was actually pretty fun in this... he took his ass-kicking like a man and the crowd was red-hot for him. Mebbe I have to ignore the AWA stuff and find more of his Japan matches... nahhh. =P

Nick Bockwinkle/ Ray motherfucking Stevens vs Red Bastien/ Crusher- AWA- CHICAGO- November 20th, 1971- (DEAN RASMUSSEN): I figured this match would be as good as any to show why Bockwinkle and Stevens were so key to the greatness of 70's wrestling. I watched a bunch of Stevens/Bockwinkle tag matches and the one thing I found is that these two guys were THE WHOLE FUCKING SHOW- literally. These two would be doing Flair-Carries-Luger every night of the week, night in-night out- as they carried horrendous loads like these two and the likes of Dick the Bruiser to really great brawls. Bockwinkle and Stevens set a standard of wrestling an entire match by themselves with little need for input from your crappy babyface brawler- a standard that would become the blueprint of all wrestling matches that follow as wrestling crawls off the mat in late 60's and becomes the big bloody cool-ass freakshow that it became in the 70s. Stevens and Bockwinkle are a weird dynamic and it really set up a cool scenario when they wrestled Crusher and Dick the Bruiser. When all four are in the ring, you have the total spectrum of 70's wrestling- Dick the Bruiser and Crusher Lazowski epitomize the legit toughguy who is a marginal brawler and all-around bad worker. Ray Stevens represents the legit tough guy who can bump like an absolute motherfucker and can also break every bone in your hand and who can work his motherfucking ass off. Bockwinkle is the new breed akin to Flair and Funk- guys with no pretensions of legit shooter status but who have embraced the bumping and performing aspects of the sport and take wrestling to a different, more financially lucrative, more art-like place. Stevens is the nuts and bolts of any match he's in and Bockwinkle is the flashy showman- though both take hellacious bumps and bleed like total ghouls. Get it straight though, Stevens is the cake and Bockwinkle is the icing. Stevens has that strange "legit credibility" aura that wrestlers used to have back then- and that's the quality that Bockwinkle, Flair and the most successful showmen of the 70's onward lose. It's weird but noticable and it's hard to explain the difference. It's like comparing Dick Murdock to Bobby Eaton- both were GREAT motherfucking wrestlers in their own way- but you KNEW Murdock could beat your ass into the ground. It's the same way here. Bockwinkle is a great wrestler, but Stevens is a great wrestler who could beat the living fuck out of you. It's a weird quality that some wrestlers have. I'm sure Bobby Eaton and Nick Bockwinkle could beat the living hell out of anyone in any given barroom- but that presence and quality isn't a basic dynamic of their ring persona- and became no longer necessary. This quality is the ONLY thing that Crusher and Bastien have. Stevens has everything that they have and has all of the ability of Bockwinkle so I guess you can figure out who the real alpha male of late sixties/early 70's wrestling was in my eyes. Anyway, Stevens was just SOOO fucking great as a worker and Bockwinkle was a good foil as they were a proto-Midnight Express bumping their asses off for these two lumbering lummoxes. Bockwinkle makes Bastien's and Crusher's one-note offense- punch, punch, punch, punch, punch- look devastating by bouncing all over the ring and selling WAAAAAY big, far bigger than you'll ever see again (I would say that Steamboat was last one to ever successfully sell this elaborately). I would say that Bockwinkle and Stevens HAD to set this level of selling, and in the process influenced a generation of wrestlers that followed, because with territories, you were gonna get your own Crushers, Bastiens and Bruisers- be they BlackJacks, Dustys or

Sammartinos. You were gonna have to get the big face draw over as something more than the weightlifting drunken galoot that he was- and Bockwinkle and Stevens are laying the blueprint that Funk and Flair follow to the tee. This match and all these matches are important to see if you want to know where modern US Pro Style came from and who Shawn Michaels, cactus Jack and Chris Benoit are coming from.

[illegible]

NEXT WEEK: THAT BIG JAPAN TAG MATCH that you GOTTA frickin' see..... NEW JAPAN!
GAEA! Mountains of OSAKA/ONITA/IWA PRO INDIE SLIME FOR YOUR SWEET ASS!
SOMEONE OTHER THAN NICK BOCKWINKLE! the same theme.WOO-HOO! OTHER COOL
BUNDLES OF CRAP!

THE DEATH VALLEY PLAYBOYS.

seven fists in the face of wrestling

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I WILL NEVER FORGET YOU. I WILL NEVER FORGIVE YOU.

-HUSKER DU

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